

Message Text

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ORIGIN PRS-01

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 SS-15 CCO-00 /017 R

DRAFTED BY S/PRS:JHTRATTNER
APPROVED BY S/PRS:JHTRATTNER
S/S-O:JTHYDEN

-----063363 260257Z /72

O 260029Z AUG 77 ZFF4
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 204071 TOSEC 090164

FOR HODDING CARTER FROM S/PRS--TRATTNER

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: SOPN, OVIP (VANCE, CYRUS R.)

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING--AUGUST 25, 1977

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NO. 14

1. RHODESIA: QUESTIONED ABOUT REPORTS FROM LAGOS (MOST NOTABLY, A JON RANDAL PIECE IN WASHPOST) DETAILING ELEMENTS OF ANGLO-AMERICAN PROPOSALS, I REPEATED THAT WE NOT PREPARED DISCUSS PROPOSALS WHILE THEY BEING PRESENTED TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES, THAT WE HAVE SAID THEY WILL BE MADE PUBLIC AT APPROPRIATE TIME, AND THAT I BELIEVED THIS WOULD BE IN NOT TOO DISTANT FUTURE. I ADDED THAT, WHILE I WASN'T PREPARED TO SINGLE OUT VARIOUS STORIES ABOUT PROPOSALS, SOME OF THEM WERE INEXACT OR INACCURATE TO SOME DEGREE. ASKED HOW LONG OWEN-YOUNG SWING WOULD TAKE, I SAID I BELIEVED THAT WHAT IS HOPED FOR IS FAIRLY SHORT TIME PERIOD, PERHAPS A WEEK. TO QUESTION WHETHER WE WOULD BE CONCERNED IF SMITH TOLD YOUNG HE WAS NOT WELCOME IN SALISBURY, I SAID
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WE WOULD REGRET IT IF YOUNG WAS UNABLE TO EXPLAIN PERSONALLY TO SMITH WHAT OUR PROPOSALS ARE.

2. CANAL TREATY: I TOOK QUESTION WHETHER, IF SOUTH AFRICA WERE THE TARGET OF UNITED NATIONS SANCTIONS, A SOUTH AFRICAN SHIP COULD TRANSIT CANAL UNDER NEW NEUTRALITY TREATY, AND ALSO WHAT COUNTRIES COULD LEGALLY BE BARRED FROM USING CANAL.

POSTED ANSWER TO FIRST QUESTION WAS AFFIRMATIVE; AND TO SECOND, THAT NO NATIONS CAN BE BARRED. ACCORDING TO AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE, CANAL WILL BE OPEN TO ALL NATIONS ON FREE, OPEN AND NON-DISCRIMINATORY BASIS.

3. PLO: I WAS ASKED (BY WALLACH) IF I HAD RECENTLY CHECKED TO SEE WHETHER ANY PLO OFFICIALS HAD MADE EFFORT OBTAIN VISA TO COME TO U.S. IN FACT I HAD JUST MADE SUCH AN INQUIRY (ANSWER IS YES). BUT SINCE THIS IS PART OF SENSITIVE GUIDANCE ON PLO VISAS NOW BEING FORMULATED AS RESULT OF MCGOVERN AMENDMENT AND WALLACH STORY ON SUBJECT, I TRIED AVOID PROBLEMS BY TAKING QUESTION. PRESSED, HOWEVER, TO SAY WHETHER I HAD INQUIRED ABOUT PLO VISA APPLICATIONS, I SAID I HAD INDEED INQUIRED, BUT WOULD HAVE TO TAKE BASIC QUESTION. ONE QUESTION AND ANSWERS OF ABOVE MENTIONED GUIDANCE WILL BE CABLED TO PARTY FOR SECRETARY'S APPROVAL.;

4. BRIEFING OF SEOUL AND TAIPEI AFTER CHINA TRIP: ASKED ABOUT REPORTS HOLBROOKE WOULD VISIT TAIWAN FOR THIS PURPOSE, I SAID BOTH GOVERNMENTS WOULD BE BRIEFED BUT COULD NOT CONFIRM WHEN OR BY WHOM. (ABOUT HOUR LATER, WIRES REPORTED SECRETARY AS SAYING HOLBROOKE WOULD VISIT BOTH CAPITALS.)

5. FROM MEDEIROS ON NEW SUBJECT: RECEIVED CALL TODAY FROM MARK MORAN, LEG ASST. TO FRANK CHURCH. HE TOLD ME SENATOR CONFIDENTIAL

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HAD CALLED HIM FROM IDAHO AND ASKED HIM GET IN TOUCH WITH YOU ABOUT IMPENDING ARRIVAL OF AMERICAN CITIZENS AND FAMILIES RELEASED BY CASTRO. CHURCH FEELS THIS EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY FOR ADMINISTRATION TO REAP SOME GOOD PUBLICITY ABOUT ITS EFFORTS TO RENEW DIPLOMATIC CONTACTS WITH FORMER ADVERSARIES. HE TOLD MORAN TO SUGGEST TO YOU THAT HIGH ADMINISTRATION OFFICIAL--SUCH AS MONDALE OR VANCE--MEET PLANE CARRYING RETURNING AMCITS.

I TOLD MORAN VANCE WOULD BE OUT OF TOWN AT TIME CURRENTLY SCHEDULED FOR RETURN OF AMCITS (LATE NEXT WEEK), AND HE REPLIED THAT IF MONDALE COULDN'T DO IT, PERHAPS CHRISTOPHER COULD. (HE DIDN'T THINK APPEARANCE BY TODMAN WOULD CARRY MUCH WEIGHT IN TERMS OF FAVORABLE PUBLICITY, SINCE TODMAN IS IDENTIFIED IN PUBLIC MIND MORE AS STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL THAN AS REPRESENTATIVE OF ADMINISTRATION.)

HE STRESSED CHURCH WAS NOT LOOKING FOR ANYTHING TO COME OUT OF THIS FOR OWN BENEFIT; HE WILL PROBABLY BE IN IDAHO WHEN ALL THIS IS HAPPENING. HE SAID CHURCH WANTED HIM TO CONVEY HIS STRONG FEELING THAT THIS TYPE OF EVENT COULD HAVE ONLY POSITIVE RAMIFICATIONS FOR ADMINISTRATION, SINCE NO

ONE COULD OBJECT TO AMCITS BEING BROUGHT HOME. IT WOULD BE AN IDEAL POINT FOR ADMINISTRATION TO REAP SOME FAVORABLE PUBLIC EXPOSURE FROM ITS FOREIGN POLICY INITIATIVES, AND HE THOUGHT WE SHOULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF IT.

MORAN SAID HE WAS ALSO GOING TO CALL AARON AT THE NSC, TO SEE IF MONDALE WAS INTERESTED. I SAID I WOULD PASS ON TO YOU CHURCH'S THOUGHTS. HE ASKED THAT I LET HIM KNOW IF WE DECIDED ANYTHING, AND I AGREED. CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TOSEC, POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, REPATRIATION, DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATION, PRESS CONFERENCES, CANALS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 26-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE204071
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: JHTRATTNER
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770308-0664
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770818/aaaaaorm.tel
Line Count: 124
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: d0cf5b52-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN PRS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1467221
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING--AUGUST 25, 1977 - NO. 14
TAGS: SOPN, OVIP, RH, PN, CU, (VANCE, CYRUS R)
To: SECRETARY
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/d0cf5b52-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009